

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
6013 Lakeside Boulevard
Indianapolis, IN 46278

June 4, 2008

SUBJECT: INF - 2008 Indiana State Fair Volunteers

TO: Indiana NRCS Employees

File Code: 260

The 2008 Indiana State Fair is August 6-17, and we are making preparations for exhibits in the Pioneer Our Land Pavilion (OLP) building and at the Pathway to Water Quality (PWQ).

The OLP display will focus on watersheds and utilize the statewide watershed model. Volunteers will talk with fairgoers about watersheds and how everyone affects his/her watershed, and about NRCS and what we do. There will be two shifts at OLP each day of the fair from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. To view the current available volunteer slots, please see the schedule posted at <http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/2008stfair-olp.html>. To volunteer for the OLP, please contact Pam Davidson at 317-290-3200, ext. 322. We are currently working on an incentive for OLP volunteers who work weekends, in addition to comp time.

At PWQ, we will work with the Indiana Conservation Partnership to staff four areas, including: greeter, water quality at home, water quality on the farm and in woodlands, and an education area. There will be three shifts each day from 9:00 a.m. to noon, from noon to 3:30 p.m., and from 3:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Please see the attached Pathway Volunteer Job Descriptions document which explains the knowledge and skills for each volunteer area. PWQ has become a key accomplishment and benefit to the Indiana Conservation Partnership, and I encourage NRCS employees to support this activity as much as possible. To volunteer, please sign up at <http://iaswcd.org/pwqsignup/>.

In addition, NRCS will staff the soils and grazing lands areas at the PWQ. To volunteer for the soils area, please contact Linda Cox at 317-290-3200, ext. 370. To volunteer for the grazing lands area, please contact Victor Shelton at 812-882-8210, ext. 8.

All volunteers will receive a ticket to enter the Fair and a letter outlining their volunteer duties. NRCS employees who volunteer to staff the exhibits on Saturday or Sunday can earn comp time; please check with your supervisor. Employees who volunteer on their normal work day may take administrative leave for their tour of duty time before or after their shift at the Fair. Please be sure to enter your time accordingly. Because this is a voluntary activity, no overtime is authorized. Use of GOV is not authorized, but employees are authorized use of POV and will be reimbursed at the advantageous rate of \$0.505 per mile. To calculate mileage on normal duty days, you can only claim miles traveled over and above the normal round trip mileage between home and duty station. For non-duty days, you can claim the total mileage from home to fairgrounds and back home.

Please sign up and enjoy the Fair!

/s/

JANE E. HARDISTY
State Conservationist

Attachment



Pathway Volunteer Job Descriptions

All volunteers become the face of the Indiana Conservation Partnership to the public. Please be friendly, relate the messages of Pathway and conservation, and engage visitors in conversations. You will find additional information on the Pathway to Water Quality at the project Web site: http://www.iaswcd.org/district_tools/pwq/index.html.

The following positions are available for volunteers:

Greeter

This position is critical to drawing in visitors to the Pathway during the fair. The Greeters are positioned at the entrance to Pathway. The job includes enticing passerby's to enter Pathway, greeting the trolley and providing the driver with the right information to announce over the loudspeaker, handing out stickers, etc. Greeters are asked to stand in the entryway to be effective in this position, not to sit behind the cart.



The greeter also:

- Keeps a count of how many folks enter Pathway (counter provided),
- Direct children wanting Indiana State Fair Wonder Trail cards stamped to the education area to tour the Worm Tunnel in order to get their card stamped,
- Passes out any giveaways to folks who show interest in the exhibit, and
- Provides directions to the nearest restrooms!

Good (comfortable) shoes, sunscreen, a hat and lots of enthusiasm are recommended. See the PWQ Web site: http://www.iaswcd.org/district_tools/pwq/index.html. Able to stand for long periods (although a chair is provided for rest).

- General knowledge of Pathway to Water Quality messages



What can I do to improve water quality at HOME? Volunteer

Volunteers in this area will talk to visitors about practices that can be done around the home to protect water quality. Some of these practices include native vegetation, water conservation, rain gardens and rain barrels. This area also covers development issues, including a pervious concrete area. See the PWQ Web site: http://www.iaswcd.org/district_tools/pwq/index.html.

- General knowledge of conservation practices for homeowners.
- General knowledge of conservation practices for construction areas.

What can I do to improve water quality on the FARM and in WOODLANDS? Volunteer (Ag/Forestry Area)

Volunteers in this area will be talking to visitors about conservation and management practices in agriculture and forestry, as well as the technical assistance that the Indiana Conservation Partnership provides to private land owners. Volunteers are encouraged to engage people in conversation in an effort to educate about conservation and the work of the Indiana Conservation Partnership.

- Knowledge of conservation practices and management practices for agriculture and/or forestry (some BMPs at Pathway include: waterway, terrace, buffer strip, no-till, forest stand improvement)
- Knowledge of Conservation Implementation Teams



Education Area Volunteer

Volunteers in this area will engage participants in water quality and conservation activities. Volunteers will be provided with information on how to conduct the education activity for 2008 the Worm's Eye View. It is two short tunnels side-by-side with healthy soil and unhealthy soil (no bugs and critters in it). The healthy soil side has a black light in it to show the critters under the soil. [>>Click here for more information on the Worm's Eye View activity.](#)

Volunteers will actively recruit visitors to travel through the tunnel. Volunteers in the education area will stamp children's Wonder Trail cards (Indiana State Fair activity).

- Willingness to work with visitors, children and adults, engaging them in activities while discussing conservation messages.

Pathway Messages

Pathway is a watershed, showing all the land that 'sheds' water, or drains, to a common place. Visitors can, "Walk the Path the Water Walks".

Water is affected by rural and urban land use. Visitors can tour different land-uses that are present in the watershed, including urban, agriculture, and forests.



There are ways to keep the water clean and safe. Pathway shows how we use the land and care for our natural resources.

There are agencies and organizations working on conservation in Indiana. Indiana USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, ISDA-Division of Soil Conservation, Purdue Cooperative Extension Service, Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the 92 SWCS located in each county, State Soil Conservation Board, Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish & Wildlife, and IDEM's Office of Water Quality.

There are 23 million acres of land in Indiana, 12 million of these are annually planted with crops. Four and a half million acres are woodlands.



How Do You Sign Up for Shifts?

- Go to <http://iaswcd.org/pwqsignup> to sign up for a shift/s at the Pathway to Water Quality.
- If you have any questions about the sign up or need to change a shift, contact **Emily Wheeler**, Pathway Intern, at **317.927.7552** or ewheeler@indianastatefair.com.
- All volunteers who sign up by Wednesday, July

30, will receive a complimentary admission ticket to the fair. After that date, we cannot guarantee that the ticket will arrive in time.

- The PWQ Web site is located at: http://www.iaswcd.org/district_tools/pwq/index.html

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